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PRIORITY

SENT DEPARTMENT 1853, REPEATED INFORMATION LONDON 359,
PARIS 332, BONN 249, BERLIN 145.

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FULL TEXT PRESIDENT'S TV BROADCAST RECEIVED TODAY. BELIEVE
IT STRUCK EXACTLY RIGHT NOTE SO FAR AS SOVS ARE CONCERNED
AND WILL BE MOST HELPFUL.

BRITISH BRIEFING JOURNALISTS LONDON TEL 4806 TO DEPT
INDICATES BRIT SERIOUSLY CONSIDERING 4 MAN IN JEEP REGIME
FOR WEST BERLIN ALONE. WHILE THIS SUGGESTION MIGHT HOLD
SOME INTEREST IF APPLIED TO ALL BERLIN, SEEMS TO ME MOST
DISADVANTAGEOUS IF LIMITED TO WEST BERLIN. MOREOVER
I WISH POINT OUT THAT IN PARALLEL AUSTRIAN SITUATION KEY
ELEMENTS IN WORKABILITY SYSTEM THERE WERE 1) FACT THAT
VITAL CENTER OF VIENNA WAS SUBJECT TO JOINT 4 POWER CONTROL
AND 2) ACTIONS OF AUSTRIAN AND VIENNESE GOVTS COULD ONLY
BE VETOED BY UNANIMITY AMONG 4 POWERS.

IN ALL THE DISCUSSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS REGARDING BERLIN
AMONG WESTERN ALLIES THAT I HAVE SEEN WE APPEAR TO
CONCENTRATE ALMOST ENTIRELY UPON ALLIED ACCESS. WHILE
I REALIZE EAST GERMAN INTERFERENCE WITH WEST GERMAN ACCESS
TO BERLIN SUBJECT TO REPRISALS AND I CERTAINLY DEFER TO
OUR GERMAN EXPERTS ON THIS PROBLEM, IT APPEARS TO ME THAT
WEST GERMAN ACCESS WILL IN LONG RUN PROVE TO BE THE
GREATER PROBLEM AND POINT WHERE WE ARE MOST VULNERABLE.

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-2-, 1853, MARCH 17, 2 PM, FROM MOSCOW

SINCE SOVIETS HAVE BEEN WILLING RUN SERIOUS RISK OF WAR OR HUMILIATING DEFEAT OVER BERLIN PROBLEM APPEARS TO ME THEY WILL PROBABLY BE WILLING TO INCUR ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL COST OF SUPPORTING EAST GERMANY IN ECONOMIC SQUEEZE ON BERLIN DESPITE POSSIBLE REPRISALS. THIS PARTICULARLY LIKELY AT SUCH TIME AS THEY MAY HAVE CONCLUDED SEPARATE PEACE TREATY AND WOULD NOT BE DIRECTLY ENGAGED. IT IS CHIEFLY FOR THIS REASON THAT I AM INCLINED TO THINK WE SHOULD CONSIDER SOME DEAL ON BERLIN QUESTION WHICH WOULD OFFSET THIS WEAKNESS IN OUR POSITION.

MOST PROMISING APPROACH WOULD APPEAR TO ME TO BE ALONG FOLL LINES. WE COULD OFFER UNILATERALLY TO SUSPEND BUT NOT RENOUNCE OCCUPATION RIGHTS IN BERLIN EITHER PENDING REUNIFICATION OR FOR A SPECIFIC PERIOD OF TIME AT END OF WHICH SITUATION WOULD BE REVIEWED. CONTINUED MAINTENANCE OF WESTERN TROOPS IN BERLIN WOULD BE COVERED BY AGREEMENT WITH WEST BERLIN GOVT. THIS WOULD MEAN TERMINATION OF OCCUPATIONAL FUNCTIONS AND SUCH ACTIVITIES AS RIAS AND OVERT INTELLIGENCE OPERATIONS. PROBLEM OF ACCESS MIGHT BE COVERED BY AGREEMENT BETWEEN WEST GERMANY AND GDR WHICH WOULD INCLUDE RIGHT OF ACCESS FOR ALLIED SECURITY FORCES IN BERLIN. FOUR POWERS MIGHT UNDERTAKE TO RESPECT SUCH AGREEMENT. THIS WOULD AVOID PROBLEM OF WESTERN RECOGNITION GDR AND WOULD BE MERELY EXTENSION OF EXISTING WEST AND EAST GERMAN CONTACTS. IF SUSPENSION WAS FOR DEFINITE PERIOD OF TIME WE MIGHT PRESS FOR COMMITMENT FROM SOVIETS THAT THEY WOULD NOT CONCLUDE PEACE TREATY WITH EAST GERMANY DURING THIS PERIOD. WE COULD ANNOUNCE THAT IF WESTERN ACCESS WERE INTERFERED WITH WE WOULD RESUME OCCUPATION RIGHTS. MOST STICKY PROBLEM SUCH DEAL WOULD PROBABLY BE QUESTION OF REFUGEES. SOVIETS UNLIKELY ACCEPT SUCH PACKAGE DEAL UNLESS WESTERN POWERS CAN MAINTAIN FIRM POSITION INVOLVING WILLINGNESS TO FIGHT IF NECESSARY IN WHICH CASE IT MIGHT BE ACCEPTED BY SOVIETS AS FACE-SAVING DEVICE.

THOMPSON

MJT/21

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